

# THE MEDICINAL AND POISONOUS FLAXWORTS OF INDIA.

BY

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The LINACEÆ are herbs, shrubs or trees, broadly distributed, especially in the northern hemisphere. They consist of 9 genera with 150 species.

The medicinal and poisonous Flaxworts of the world belong to 5 genera: HUGONIA (Tropics); Ixonanthes (tropical Asia); LINUM (temperate and subtropical regions, especially Mediterranean); REINDWARTIA (North India, China); ROUCHERIA (Guiana).

*Ixonanthes cochinchinensis* Pierre, which is used medicinally in Annam, is not found in India.

- A. Petals contorted, fugacious. Perfect stamens as many as the petals. Herbs rarely shrubs
  - I. Calyx glabrous or pubescent. Styles 5. Capsule 5-celled ... LINUM.
  - II. Calyx glabrous. Styles 3-4. Capsule 3-4-celled ... REINWARDTIA.
- B. Petals contorted, fugacious. Perfect stamens 2-3-times as many as the petals. Fruit a drupe. Usually scandent shrubs
  - I. Sepals subacute, tomentose, ebracteolate ... HUGONIA.
  - II. Sepals obtuse, bracteolate ... ROUCHERIA.

## HUGONIA.

The genus consists of 11 species, inhabiting the Tropics of the Old World.

*H. Planchoni* Hook. f. is used medicinally in Liberia and Sierra Leone, *H. serrata* Lam. in La Reunion.

**Hugonia Mystax** Linn. is found in the Konkan and North Kanara of the Bombay Presidency, throughout the dry forests of the Madras Presidency, and in Ceylon.

The bruised roots are employed externally in reducing inflammatory swellings, and as an antidote to snake-bites. In the form of a powder, it is administered internally as an anthelmintic and febrifuge. The bark of the root is also employed as an antidote to poisons.

Mhaskar and Caius have shown experimentally that the root is not an antidote to snake venom.

*Canarese* : Modirakkanni—; *English* : Climbing Flax—; *Malayalam* : Modera-kkanni, Motirakkanni—; *Sinhalese* : Bugatteya, Mahagetiya—; *Tamil* : Agori, Kodivirai, Modirakkanni—; *Telugu* : Gatrinta, Kakibira, Penkebedali, Pisangi, Renangi, Tivvapatiki, Ungaralapidemu, Vendapa—; *Tulu* : Mullankola—; *Uriya* : Chulijinka—,